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ABSTRACT

A formative and summative evaluation was made of eight school-age child care (SACC) training workshops conducted in 1989-90 for 190 participants in upstate New York. (The focus of the SACC workshops was to "train the trainers," as well as to provide trainees with quality materials and instruction for future training with their staff members.) All participants evaluated the individual classes at the end of each session as part of the formative assessment. Summative evaluative information from pre- and posttest questionnaires demonstrated a positive change in the trainees' attitudes about the importance of training. There was also marked improvement in their knowledge about how best to provide training to staff members (where to conduct it, how much training to schedule, who should do the training, and where to get resources). Trainees also rated statements describing high quality behaviors in SACC programs. Scores from the pretest were used to design a 15-item Guttman Scale that demonstrated participants' level of knowledge about desirable behaviors. The Guttman Scale will help trainers identify specific curriculum topics for future staff training. Ninety days following the training, 40 percent of the participants were mailed a follow-up questionnaire in the hope of receiving at least 48 (25 percent) completed and usable questionnaires in return. (In actuality, 58 usable questionnaires were received, for a 27 percent response rate). More than half the respondents reported having used some of the training materials with their staff members immediately after the training and the remainder said they planned to use the materials in future staff training. Three-quarters of the participants reported planning at least some staff training annually, a significant increase from pretraining levels. As a result of the workshops, participants reported a variety of planned changes in their programs. The trainees' major complaint was that the training workshops should have been scheduled in the fall instead of in the spring. (Author/KC)

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SCHOOL-AGE CHILD CARE STAFF TRAINING EVALUATION

State Wide Training in New York State
sponsored by
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and
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ABSTRACT

During 1989-1990, Cornell Cooperative Extension, in collaboration with the New York State Department of Social Services, offered eight, 20 hour school-age child care staff training workshops for 190 participants in Upstate New York. The focus of the SACC workshops was to "Train the Trainers," as well as to provide trainees with quality materials and instructions for future training with their staff members.

The training workshops were evaluated with both formative and summative assessment techniques. All participants evaluated the individual classes at the end of each session as part of the formative assessment. Summative evaluative information from pre and post questionnaires demonstrated positive change in the trainees' attitudes about the importance of training. There was also marked improvement in their knowledge about how best to provide training to staff members -- where to conduct it, how much training to schedule, who should do the training, and where to get resources. Trainees also rated statements describing quality behaviors in SACC programs. Scores from the pre test statements about quality behaviors were used to design a fifteen item Guttman Scale that demonstrated participants' level of knowledge about desirable behaviors. The Guttman Scale will help trainers identify specific curriculum topics for future staff training.

Twenty-five percent of the participants were mailed a ninety day follow-up questionnaire. Over half of the respondents reported having used some of the training materials with their staff members immediately after the training and the remainder said they planned to use the materials when they offered staff training in the future. Three-quarters of the participants reported planning at least some staff training on an annual basis, a significant increase from pre training levels. As a result of the workshops, participants reported a variety of planned changes in their programs. The trainees' major complaint was that the training workshops should have been scheduled during the Fall instead of late Spring.

INTRODUCTION

In the mid 1970's, American society passed an important demographic watershed -- more than half of all mothers with school-age children were employed outside the home. (Wellesley MA: Center for Research on Women, School-Age Child Care Project Staff, personal communication, August 5, 1988) As mothers continue to enter the work force in unprecedented numbers, the need for affordable, high quality child care grows. In 1984, for example, approximately 13 percent of all school-age children nationwide cared for themselves after school, or were cared for by another child under 14 years old. In New York State this translated into an estimated 152,000 school-age children, including 29,000 five to eight year olds, who received no adult supervision during the hours after school. And, that number has increased since 1984. (New York State Council on Children and Families, 1988)

As the number of these."latch-key" children continues to grow, research indicates that self-care can impair development, especially for children in poverty. Researchers who have studied the academic and social competence of children in self-care have concluded that the negative effects of self-care are more pronounced in situations where there are other risk factors such as low income or threatening environments. (Coolson, Seligson, and Garbarino, 1985) Child care experts agree, "Day care has became a crying need for families of all income levels. However, no one needs good, developmental day care more than low income families." (New York Times, 1988) High quality, affordable, and available school-age child care programs can have an enormous impact on the lives of all children, but especially on the lives of at-risk children.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

It does not take long to review the literature on day care for school-age children since what little there is applies primarily to group care. Care of school-age children is not a highly visible or well-developed service. It appears that organized services to this age child would be both easier and less costly to provide, since older children are more independent of adults and need fewer hours of care because of attendance at school. Yet, it does not seem to be happening in any sort of organized fashion in most communities, especially communities outside large metropolitan areas.

Locating research related to quality in school-age child care is even more rare. During the mid seventies, Prescott and Milich (1974) based their criteria for quality in school-age child care on the development of school-age children. They conceptualized healthy childhood growth as a series of developmental steps. The school-age period should be viewed as time of identification with tasks and with the development of a sense of industry. For children of this age, the hours <u>out</u> of school need to provide opportunities for:

- developing and discovering skills,

- using existing skills for doing and making in cooperation with others,

•taking responsibility, and

•being in close contact with adults who represent good models of the world of work.

A primary responsibility for adults during this period is to assist children in discovering their own talents and in gaining a feeling of competence. This role becomes especially important for children who have not found out what they can do in school and may need to discover their competence in skills that the school does not foster.

The American Child Care Foundation, Inc. recently expanded on what Prescott and Milich described as essential components of quality school-age child care. The Child Care Foundation (1989) established priorities for the development and improvement of school-age programs by identifying a set of quality indicators for school-age child care. These indicators relate to:

•center staffing,
•planning and presentation of activities,
•availability and use of facilities, space, equipment, and supplies,
•management and supervision of children; involvement of parents, and
•program administration and management.

After five years of incentive funding to local groups for school-age child care start-up, the New York State Department of Social Services authorized training that included teaching staff members about quality indicators. The evaluation of this Training Project provided information for this paper.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT

During 1988, a survey about training needs was mailed to 190 directors of school-age child care programs in New York State who had received start-up funding from the New York State Department of Social Services. A sixty percent return of the survey indicated that directors were eager to receive information about how to plan creative activities for children, help with conflict resolution, suggestions for effective discipline and instruction in the developmental needs of children. They indicated that training for them had been basically nonexistent and that it was desperately needed for their staff members. As one director said,"We have kids, now what do we do with them!"

NEW YORK STATE SCHOOL-AGE CHILD CARE STAFF TRAINING

In response to the needs assessment, the New York State Department of Social Services in 1989-1990, offered a state-wide training program for school-age child care managers as a crucial step in creating the work force necessary to deliver quality child

care services. Cornell Cooperative Extension conducted eight, 20 hour school-age child care staff training workshops in Upstate New York. Nearly 200 participants representing 120 different school-age child care programs attended the workshops, which varied in length from seven hours each during three days to half day presentations, over a period of five days.

Cooperative Extension was the appropriate agency for delivering consistent and dependable training at the eight different sites across the State since professional human development agents are already employed by Cooperative Extension in nearly every county of the state. Extension agents are also experts in adult education with extensive experience in working in informal educational settings. The agents are well acquainted with their communities and aware of where child care programs, both licensed and unlicensed, might be operating. The agents in the eight training sites worked closely with local child care coordinating councils and groups of child providers in identifying programs, publicizing the workshops, and planning and delivering the training.

It is not surprising that some variation was found among individuals who attended the training classes since child care programs registering for the training frequently did not send the same person to all the classes. But, in comparing demographic information across programs for both pre and post assessments and in comparing demographic data for the total sample from pre to post, there was no significant difference among "time worked in school age child care," "job title," and "level of education." Each respondent was asked these same three questions as part of the pre assessment and again as part of the post assessment.

A clear majority (three-quarters) of the respondents to both the pre and post assessment questionnaires reported having worked in school-age child care five years or less. School-age child care and the NYS Department of Social Services incentives to start school-age child care programs are relatively new in New York State so it was logical to find that most staff members did not report long careers with school-age child care. The limited years of professional work experience corroborated the need for training that many of these respondents said they wanted and could use.

Enrollees were asked to describe themselves by job title. Half the training attendees for both the pre and post assessments said they were either program directors or site directors. Since the workshops focused on "Train the Trainers" with the expectation that attendees would in turn train their staff members, the high percentage of directors participating in the classes was exactly want the Project designers had in mind. The remaining participants were teachers, aides/assistants, and board members.

As expected by the Project designers, half the trainees were two year college graduates or had even less formal education. The training materials, consequently, were developed in short, self-contained modules with interactive components and many visuals in anticipation that many para-professionals would be using them. The focus of the workshops was to "Train the Trainers," as well as to provide participants with quality materials and instructions for future training with their staff members.

The New York school-age child care training curriculum included information on planning child care environments which meet developmental needs of school-age children, enhancing children's self-concepts, educating and supervising child care workers, establishing procedures for center management, and involving families and communities in school-age child care. Three different curriculum pieces were developed specifically for the Project and twelve others were carefully selected and purchased for use in the training classes.

Since child care programs are often staffed with para-professionals (individuals with less than a four year college education), the training procedures and materials for this training were geared to the para-professional worker. The advantages of para-professionals is that they often work in their immediate communities where they are familiar with many of the children and families; and they are often available for lower wages than are professional employees. To be effective, however, para-professionals usually need a great deal of on-the-job training and supervision. The training included a great deal of interactive techniques and materials, and was organized in learning segments of less than one hour each which could be used later as part of center staff meetings. Para-professionals, particularly, respond to interactive learning materials which include visuals such as video tapes.

EVALUATION DESIGN

The procedures and questions used for the evaluation model were developed from a literature review of other evaluative devices used in school-age programs, consultation with early childhood experts, visits to school-age child care programs, and conferences with school-age child care professionals. In addition, Project staff members attended the annual meetings of the National Association for the Education of Young Children, the Child Care Foundation meetings in Washington, D.C. about school-age child care, and the Cooperative Extension national meetings about school-age child care. Information from all of these sources was compiled as a basis for establishing valid and reliable questions for the evaluation data collection questionnaires. The basic evaluation model included the following components:

-- Formative evaluations titled, "Workshop Assessment," were conducted during each training session to assess training process and procedures. Information was requested from each participant about how the training was publicized, organized, presented, materials used, quality of instruction, and suggestions for changing and improving subsequent sessions.

-- Pre test, "Pre Training Assessment I," to measure enrollees knowledge about what constitutes quality training, how it should be delivered, frequency of training, components of training such as materials; and attitudes about the need for staff training, value of training, and opinions about what inhibits good training. Enrollees were asked to complete this questionnaire at the first training session.

-- Post test, "Post Training Assessment II," a companion questionnaire to Assessment I to ascertain changes in knowledge about and attitudes towards effective staff training which included quality instructional procedures and materials. Enrollees responded to this questionnaire at the last training class.

-- Pre test, "Pre Training Assessment III," used to assess enrollees knowledge about behaviors necessary to provide quality school-age child care. Enrollees were asked to complete this form at the first training session.

-- Post test, "Post Training Assessment IV," as a companion questionnaire to Pre Training Assessment III to document changes in knowledge about behaviors exhibited in quality school-age child care. Enrollees completed this form at the last class.

-- 90 day follow up questionnaire was sent to a randomly selected sample of 25 percent of the training participants to document changes in knowledge and attitudes about staff training, to elicit plans for positive changes in program delivery, and to secure additional information about the overall value of the training sessions they attended.

EVALUATION OUTCOMES

Formulative Evaluations

The formative evaluation questionnaire is summarized in Table One about training publicity, timing, location, facilities, parking, food, and group size from all eight of the training sites. The responses were overwhelmingly "ideal" or "satisfactory."

In addition, the formative evaluation asked questions about "Information presented," "Materials used," and "Presenter's procedures and delivery." Answers to these questions were also quite positive, with approximately seventy percent of the total responses about information, materials, procedures, and delivery falling in the very useful category. Another twenty percent of the ratings fell under moderately useful, and the remaining responses were divided between slightly useful and useless.

Summative Questions Related to Knowledge and Attitudes about Staff Training

Since the Training Program was geared to "Train the Trainers," all participants were asked a series of questions at the beginning of the classes and again at the end:

-- related to the attitudes towards staff training,
-- how they feel about doing staff training,
-- how much training they do now and how much they plan to do in the future,
-- kinds of training materials they use now and titles of materials they might use in the future,
-- outside training resources they use or plan to use,
-- where they do training, and
-- how to make training most effective.

Table 1

WORKSHOP ASSESSMENT
SUMMARY OF TOTAL RESPONSES FOR ALL CLASSES AT ALL 8 SITES
(actual numbers of daily tabulations)

	Unsatisfactory	Needs Improvement	Satisfactory	Ideal
Timeliness of publicity about Workshop	2	19	132	142
Amt of detail about Wrkshp in publicity materials	2	48	166	149
Response to phone calls about workshop	4	9	207	111
Physical location of Workshop	8	18	231	143
Public transportation to training site	14	13	135	70
Parking facilities	14	30	200	129
Room arrangements	2	43	215	141
Meal arrangements	1	17	213	161
Day of week for Workshop	2	12	254	146
Time of day for Workshop	1	20	221	158
Size of group participating	2	16	217	168
Coffee/juice breaks	3	6	169	170

Results for the total group provided some interesting information about attitudes toward training and plans for doing staff training. Respondents reported limited access to staff training before these classes were offered. Only eight percent said they had frequent access to training while 53 percent reported some access and 43 percent said training opportunities occurred rarely. A follow-up question asked about the cost of available training and 33 percent said available training was either prohibitively or somewhat expensive.

Overall results from pre to post testing showed positive improvements in both attitudes about the importance of staff training and plans for offering training. When asked at the beginning about the importance of SACC staff training, a vast majority (86%) of respondents said it was important, but an even higher percent (91%) said it was "very important" at the end of the training. In terms of feeling comfortable about doing training with their staff members, no one reported feeling, "not comfortable at all doing staff training" at the end of the classes.

A real difference between the pre and post assessments resulted from the question about how frequently do you plan to do training in staff meetings. On the pre test, only twenty percent reported, "regular training at part of staff meetings," and another 28 percent said, "rarely," or "no" training as part of staff meetings." On the post test, 71 percent of the respondents said they planned, "regular training as part of staff meetings," and only eight percent reported, "no" or "few" plans for training as part of staff meetings.

When asked about plans for encouraging staff to attend formal child care classes, the pre test showed that 42 percent of the respondents encouraged their staff, "frequently or sometimes" while 23 percent said, "rarely or no." On the post test, 92 percent said they planned to encourage their staff to attend formal classes, "frequently or sometimes" and only one percent reported plans for "no or rare encouragement." Likewise, when asked about plans for inviting professional experts to meet with the staff members, 40 percent said that in the past they had invited experts "frequently or sometimes," and 30 percent said, "rarely or not at all." For the future (after the training classes), 85 percent of the respondents reported plans for inviting experts to their programs "frequently or sometimes," and only one percent said, "rarely or not at all."

When asked if they expected their staff members to study on their own, only a third of the respondents said on the pre test "frequently or sometimes" (32%), and another third said "rarely or no" (31%). On the post test, however, two-thirds reported they would expect staff to study on their own "frequently or sometimes" (64%), and less than one third said "rarely or no" (28%).

When asked about specific time devoted to or planned for training, 62 percent of the respondents reported on the pre test that they planned "eleven or more hours annually" for training; and on the post test 89 percent said they would plan "eleven or more hours annually" for training. Similarly, when asked who did their staff training, 42 percent of respondents answered that program directors did the training, but for the future 60 percent said they planned for program directors to do the staff training.

A question about "where is staff training most effectively done," was asked and as part of the pre test the respondents said in "staff meetings" (33%), in "workshops" (67%), and on an "individual basis" (8%). These results changed somewhat for the post test with 44 percent of the respondents reporting "staff meetings," 48 percent saying as part of "workshops," and six percent noting on an "individual basis."

Both pre and post assessments provided the respondents with an open ended question about "how best to offer staff training to school-age child care workers." Comments on the post test were more focused, more specific in terms of materials to be used, and included more detailed plans than were mentioned on the pre test. Table Two shows results of key questions for the total sample from the pre and post assessments for the Train the Trainer Questionnaires.

In summary, respondents came to the training classes feeling that staff training was important and they left feeling much more strongly about the importance of training. At the end of the training, it appeared that a vast majority of the participants were now planning to do training as part of regularly planned staff meetings. In addition, more staff members would now be expected to attend formal classes and study on their own as part of the training endeavor. A much higher percentage of participants were now planning specific hours of staff training, and much of their training would be done by the program directors in staff meetings and workshops.

Table 2

RESULTS OF KEY QUESTIONS FROM PRE AND POST ASSESSMENTS
TRAIN THE TRAINER QUESTIONNAIRES---TOTAL SAMPLE

	Pre (N = 144)			Post (N = 133)		
Is SACC Staff Training	very important 86%	somewhat important 13%		very important 91%	somewhat important 3%	
how comfortable feel doing training	very/usually comfortable 60%	somewhat/not comfortable 34%		very/usually comfortable 57%	somewhat/not comfortable 38%	
plan to do training in staff meetings	regularly 20%	rarely/no 028%		regularly 71%	rarely/no 8%	
will encourage staff to attend formal child care related classes	frequently/ sometimes 42%	rarely/no 23%		frequently/ sometimes 92%	rarely/no 1%	
expect staff to study on own	frequently/ sometimes 32%	rarely/no 31%		frequently/ sometimes 80%	rarely/no 14%	
training time planned for past/future	11 hours or more annually 40%			11 hours or more annually 89%		
training done or to be done by program director	program director 42%			program director 60%		
training most effectively done	part of staff meetings 33%	workshops 67%	individual 8%	part of staff workshops 44%	workshops 48%	individual 6%

Questions Related to Behaviors Necessary for Quality School-Age Child Care

As part of the pre and post testing of workshop participants, all attendees were asked at the beginning of the classes and again at the end to rate whether 43 statements showed high or low quality behavior in a school-age child care program. The purpose of these ratings was to measure the respondents' ability to identify quality behaviors in school-age child care before and after attending the training classes.

The pre and post questionnaires containing the statements about desirable behavior were tabulated for pre and post training scores for the total group and for individual training sites. Table 3 shows the results of those scores. There were 114 matched respondents who completed both the pre and post questionnaires. Scores for respondents completing only the pre test or the post test are also shown on Table 3, but are of less value than the scores for the matched pairs.

Table 3

BEHAVIORS NECESSARY FOR QUALITY SCHOOL-AGE CHILD CARE PROGRAMS
PRE AND POST ASSESSMENT MEAN SCORES
BY INDIVIDUAL TRAINING SITE AND FOR TOTAL GROUP

	Pre only	Both		Post Only
		Pre	and Post	
Onondaga	34.4 N=8	34.2 N=24	35.0	33.3 N=6
Monroe/Ontario	37.0 N=10	34.3 N=31	34.6	26.5 N=6
Niagara	36.4 N=12	36.1 N=16	37.2	30.3 N=4
Rensselaer	40.0 N=1	35.9 N=18	36.0	33.4 N=9
Ulster	27.5 N=2	33.8 N=5	35.8	39.0 N=1
Clinton	37.5 N=6	34.0 N=8	37.0	30.7 N=3
Chemung	27.0 N=1	38.5 N=2	38.5	
Jefferson	35.3 N=3	37.6 N=10	38.9	37.5 N=2
Total Group	35.7 N=43	35.1 N=114	35.9	31.8 N=31

Overall scores for the total group improved from the pre to post test. At some training sites the total scale scores improved more than at others. The most improvement appeared to be in very rural areas where, perhaps, the respondents had had no previous exposure to training about quality school-age child care.

The behavior ratings were also used to construct a Guttman Scale to show how the items built upon one another. After the pre test information was scored for 157 respondents, the Scale was developed using fifteen of the items. Guttman Scaling is an analytic tool for designing scales based on the premise that in the social world, individuals do many things in a cumulative fashion. Each successive level of knowledge or behavior depends upon attaining a previous level of knowledge or behavior.

As shown in Figure One, all respondents judged the three bottom scale statements correctly for 100 percent agreement. Progression to the top of the Scale was more difficult. Items at the top of the Scale were more discriminating and difficult for respondents to judge correctly implying that many participants were not sure whether the behavior described at the top of the Scale reflected high or low quality child care.

Results of the Guttman Scale will help agents and trainers identify specific topics to focus on in future staff training. Conceptually, items at the bottom of the Scale are less complex, easier to understand, and form the foundation for the teaching of more complicated ideas higher on the Scale. The Scale also shows participants' level of knowledge about desirable behaviors.

90 Day Follow-up of Trainees Attending Training Workshops -- data collection

A critical component of the SACC staff training evaluation was a ninety day follow-up of 25 percent of the trainees to determine how enduring the training information was and what actual behavior changes were taking place or were planned for at the centers. The follow-up assessment involved a six page questionnaire for the enrollees about the workshops they had attended earlier in the spring.

The primary goal of the training was two fold: to encourage the workshop participants to share the training information and materials with their staff members in short, well organized training sessions, and to make necessary changes and improvements in their own programs. Consequently, the survey questions were geared chiefly to attitudes about the importance of staff training, plans for offering training to staff members, and changes in programming and environments participants have made or plan to make in the near future. Participants were also asked to rate the value of the training workshops and materials. The questionnaire provided space for open-ended, general responses about the training.

Since the 90 day follow-up was to be conducted with 25 percent of the trainees, the questionnaire was mailed to forty percent (75) of the enrollees in anticipation of receiving at least 48 (25%) completed and usable questionnaires in return. Of the 75 questionnaires mailed out 52 were returned in usable form providing a follow-up sample of 27 percent of all workshop enrollees. The questionnaire sample was selected at random using a stratified by training site sampling technique of 40 percent of all program enrollees.

Two weeks after the original mailing, the same sample list was mailed a reminder post card. The post card was sent to all names in the follow-up sample since the questionnaires were totally anonymous and there was no way to know who specifically had returned questionnaires. The post card thanked those who had returned their completed questionnaires and reminded those who had not, that it was important to do so.

	Percent agreeing with this item and all items below it
Limits and expectations for children's behavior are clearly directed by staff with little argument from the children	26%
Staff almost always have snacks prepared and ready to serve when children arrive at the center	52%
An effective school-age child program encourages staff to relate to children primarily in group settings	69%
Children are urged to remain in preestablished groups and participate in activities arranged for the day	78%
Staff are careful to treat all children the same since there are few temperamental differences among school-age children	82%
Daily schedule is firm, routine is predictable, children's needs usually don't change from day to day	87%
A major focus of the program can be school homework	90%
A program manual on policies and procedures is important only if the program is licensed	91%
Staff are skilled at problem solving and help children work through conflicts in positive ways	96%
Staff/child ratios are low enough to support a varied program of activities and individualized attention	97%
Staff focus on the child's strengths when dealing with negative behavior	97%
Staff help quiet, withdrawn children become comfortable in center activities	98%
Children are allowed to make choices about activities based on needs, interests, and skill levels	100%
An effective school-age child care program respects family values and cultural traditions	100%
A variety of activities is planned that are developmentally appropriate for the children	100%

Coefficient of Reproducibility = .92

Figure 1 GUTTMAN SCALE FOR QUALITY IN SCHOOL-AGE CHILD CARE PROGRAMS

90 Day Follow-up of Trainees Attending Training Workshops -- results

Since the primary focus of the workshops was, "To Train the Trainers," the follow-up questionnaire inquired about future plans for staff training. Respondents were as positive about the need for staff training, schedules for staff training, and plans for using the training materials as they had been when they answered the post test assessment questionnaires during the last training class session.

Respondents were asked if they now felt comfortable about doing staff training and NO one reported, "not very comfortable," while 100 percent said, "somewhat or very comfortable." When asked about frequency of and total training time planned for, the respondents said they planned, "regular" training (69%) with eleven to fifty hours annually (75%).

When asked about the value of the training materials in helping to plan staff training, sixty percent said the materials were of great value: 52 percent reported having used some of the training materials immediately after the training ended; and 48 percent reported plans for using the materials in the near future. The "video tapes" appeared to be the first and most frequently used training materials with the, "games" second. As part of future training plans, the "resource Manual," and the Curriculum materials were most often mentioned.

The participants noted that as a result of the workshops they had already made some changes in their program environments. The changes they noted in order of frequency were: materials more accessible (42%), negotiated use of school space (27%), and added place for quiet activities (23%). When asked about plans for working toward licensing. 58 percent reported that their programs were already licensed. Twenty-nine percent said they planned to pursue licensing in the near future, and only six percent reported that licensing was not possible. Likewise, they were asked about plans for working toward a 1:10 staff to child ratio, and 79 percent said they already had a 1:10 ratio; two percent more said they plan to establish that ratio, and eight percent reported looking into the possibility of a 1:10 ratio. Only six percent said such a ratio was not feasible.

Questions directed toward programming included concerns about appropriate play and exploration, learning adult skills, cultural diversity, and children's participation in planning. Table Four shows how the respondents answered those questions.

Nearly half of the programs said they already encouraged appropriate play and exploration activities, and encouraged children to participate in planning activities, setting procedures, and enforcing the rules. Another 29 percent reported they were now planning more appropriate play and exploration activities for the future; and 32 percent said they were planning to involve the children more in the future in making decisions about the program.

Table 4

RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS ABOUT PROGRAMMING I

	appropriate play; exploration	learning adults skills	cultural diversity	children participate in planning
our program:				
already offers	62%	19%	10%	46%
difficult to offer	4%	13%	2%	4%
considering offering	6%	23%	52%	19%
planning to offer	29%	44%	33%	32%

Only 19 percent of the respondents said their programs already offered opportunities for the children to learn real, adult skills, and only 10 percent said they already offered a great deal of culturally diverse types of activities. After the workshops, 67 percent reported considering or planning to offer more opportunities to learn real, adult skills, and 85 percent said they were considering or planning more activities which dealt with cultural diversity.

A second set of questions about programming included using community resources, involving parents, serving nutritious snacks, and knowing children individually. The results of these questions are shown in Table Five. Even though three-quarters of the respondents said they already served nutritious snacks and knew the children on an individual basis, 12 percent more said they were now planning to serve nutritious snacks, and 25 percent more said they were planning to provide children with more individual staff attention. Thirty-eight percent reported already using numerous community resources, but 50 percent said they were now considering or planning to use more community resources. Likewise, 29 percent said they already involved parents in many aspects of the program, but 44 percent reported considering or planning more involvement for parents.

When asked about plans for changes in discipline procedures, 48 percent said they would continue to use current discipline procedures. Sixty percent reported that they plan to help children learn problem solving and negotiation skills, and to involve children in establishing rules. Over 50 percent said they plan to encourage staff to try new discipline techniques, and to help children learn logical consequences of their behavior. Thirty-one percent noted that they plan to use fewer, "time outs."

Table 5

RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS ABOUT PROGRAMMING II

	community resources	involving parents	nutritious snacks	know children individually
our program:				
already does	38%	29%	79%	71%
difficult to do	15%	29%		
consider doing	23%	19%	8%	6%
planning to do	27%	25%	12%	25%

One of the open-ended questions asked respondents to share additional information about how they planned to offer training for their staff members. A number of people described specific plans for staff training ranging from sharing training staff and workshops with Headstart, to scheduling training during the summer, or offering weekly and monthly training during the school year. A second open-ended question asked for other comments about the school-age child care staff training workshops. While there were some complaints about the timing of the workshops and a few boring speakers, the vast majority of the comments praised the training materials, commended a majority of the trainers and speakers, and strongly urged more such training. Specific suggestions were made including ideas for improving the training when it is offered again. The attention respondents gave to answering the questionnaire in such detail is vivid demonstration of the intense interest the participants took in the training program.

CONCLUSIONS

As part of the formative evaluation process, the trainees rated the New York State School-Age Child Care Staff Training Project publicity, timing, location, facilities, parking, food, and group size overwhelmingly as "ideal" or "satisfactory." They also gave very positive ratings to "information presented," "materials used," and "presenters' procedures and delivery."

Results of the summative evaluation showed that from the first of the workshops to the end of the training period, there was positive change in the trainees' attitudes about the importance of staff training. There was also marked improvement in their knowledge about how best to provide training to staff members--where to conduct it, how much training to schedule, who should do the training, and where to get resources. After the workshops, participants described more focused plans for providing regular training to their staff members.

After ninety days, the respondents were still very positive about the workshops. They were particularly pleased with the training materials distributed and the teaching techniques used. They requested more such workshops, but suggested that late summer and early fall would be better timing for such training. More specifically, over half of the respondents reported using some of the training materials with their staff members immediately after returning to their programs, and the remainder said they planned to use the materials when they offered staff training in the future. Three-quarters of the participants reported planning at least some staff training on an annual basis.

As a result of the workshops, participants reported a variety of planned changes in their programs. Some said they wanted to pursue licensing, and others reported looking into the possibility of a 1:10 staff to child ratio. In terms of programming, many of the respondents said they now were planning to provide appropriate play and exploration opportunities for the youngsters, more time to learn adult skills, increased activities related to cultural diversity, and occasions for children to participate in planning at the centers. Likewise, participants said they planned to increase the use of community resources, to involve parents more in the programs, to offer nutritious snacks, and to get to know children on an individual basis.

Over half of the respondents said they were going to encourage staff to try new discipline techniques, and use fewer, "time outs." Specifically, they reported wanting to help children learn problem solving and negotiation skills, and to learn the logical consequence of their behavior.

In addition to the information trainees learned about quality school-age child care, another positive outcome of the workshop series was the identification of school-age programs around the State. Further benefits included the distribution of training materials to program managers (trainees), and the sharing of quality trainer materials and techniques with cooperative extension agents and child care coordinating councils throughout the State.

It was evident from this Project that there is a great lack of quality school-age child care staff training in New York State. Training workshops like this one should be offered in the remaining regions of the State, and repeated in some regions where there is a waiting list of people wanting to attend. Both trainer and trainees rated the workshops very positively primarily because the classes focused specifically on the needs of the participants for appropriate educational materials and easy to follow, interactive training techniques.

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